

# News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Joe Dalton

March 11, 1998

(202) 225-2836

## **MARKEY SCORCHES TOBACCO INDUSTRY AD CAMPAIGN**

**WASHINGTON, DC** - U.S. Rep. Ed Markey (D-MA) today voiced skepticism over the tobacco industry's ad campaign aimed at selling Congress and the American people on the proposed global settlement negotiated by the major tobacco companies and numerous state's Attorneys General last June.

Markey said, "If the tobacco industry wants to market the proposed settlement to Congress and the American people with this multi-million dollar ad campaign, they should be required to put a warning label on these ads which reads: **"WARNING: LAWSUIT PROTECTIONS FOR THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY ARE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH."**

At a House Commerce Committee hearing in January, Markey expressed serious reservations about a confidential industry memo prepared by the Bozell Sawyer Miller Group which advocated that the tobacco industry spend \$20 million to, "generate a sense of urgency on Capitol Hill for enacting legislation by the late spring or early summer." Among the communications objectives cited in the memo were, "to transmit a clear message on just how far the industry is willing to go and what stands to be lost if the industry is pushed too far and is forced to back out . . . (and) to create a basis for an exit, i.e. ideally, industry made a legitimate offer and the **politicians played politics and made a mess of it** (emphasis theirs)."

"The tobacco industry has been engaged in a high stakes game of hide and seek with the American people, Congress, and public health officials. Just days before they are required to submit thousands of additional pages of damaging internal documents to the Commerce Committee, the industry decides to spend millions on ads to inform the public of 'What's in it for them.' The industry ought to be telling the American people what's in it for the people who 'light up' lethal tobacco products; what's in those documents that they are fighting tooth-and-nail to keep secret; and what's in it for the thousands of people whose class actions lawsuits the settlement would bar for all time," said Rep. Markey.

Rep. Markey said, "These are just a few of the 'What's in it . . .' questions that the tobacco industry's new ad campaign doesn't answer. The industry's bought and paid for media strategy should have another communications objective: to **stop playing games with Congress and the American people and to clean up the toxic waste dump they have created in the American healthcare system.**"

###